

BUDGET WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, May 19, 2014, for the purpose of undertaking a final review of the Proposed FY 2015 budget.

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:03 p.m. It was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan. Councilmember Judith F. Davis was out of the country.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; David E. Moran, Assistant City Manager; Celia Craze, Director of Planning & Community Development; Julie McHale, Director of Recreation; Joe McNeal, Assistant Director of Recreation; Greg Varda, Acting Assistant Director of Recreation; Jim Sterling, Assistant Director of Public Works; Liz Park, Director of CARES; Chief James Craze; Captains John Barrett and Jim Parker; Lieutenants Marie Triesky and Tom Moreland; Dale Worley, Information Technology Director; Deirdre Allen, Finance Manager; and Anne Marie Belton, Executive Associate. Captain Tom Kemp arrived at 9:02 p.m.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Laura Kressler, Chair, Public Safety Advisory Committee; Tom White, Greenbelt News Review; Molly Lester; and Bill Orleans.

Mayor Jordan opened the meeting by asking Mr. McLaughlin to give a brief summary of the previous nine (9) budget work sessions noting that there will not be any significant revenue changes through fiscal year (FY) 2016. While there will be a positive impact by townhome sales in Greenbelt Station, those revenues won't be recognized until early 2016.

Ms. Mach suggested placing three items of general consensus, a city-wide IT position (\$60,000), increasing the city's minimum wage to the county's level of \$8.40/ hour (\$13,000) and tents for the Labor Day festival (\$9,000), up for consideration.

Ms. Mach also stated that there was general agreement to providing funding for a county wide animal shelter, but an amount needs to be agreed upon. Mr. Putens suggested not setting a funding amount until the city has a chance to review the study once it is done.

Mayor Jordan, Ms. Mach, Mr. Herling, Mr. Putens and Ms. Pope reviewed their proposals of changes to the FY 2015 proposed budget. Mayor Jordan then read a statement prepared by Ms. Davis regarding her ideas/ concerns.

Mr. Putens requested that employee identification badges be added to the management objectives. He asked that the proposal put together by staff be brought to Council in the next month or so.

Mr. Putens also requested that staff present three separate proposals of which department Code Enforcement, Parking Enforcement and Animal Control are best suited and requested that the topic be discussed in executive session.

Mr. Herling suggested raising non-resident fees to the Aquatic & Fitness Center by 25¢ (from \$3.75 to \$4 and \$5.75 to \$6). This increase would generate approximately \$4,500.

In addition to the general consensus items shared by Ms. Mach earlier in the meeting, the Council was in agreement to identify additional funding for the following items: one (1) full-time equivalent (FTE) in the City Manager's office with funding to begin January 1, 2015 (\$45,000); an external relations contractor to review grants and opportunities for the city (\$30,000); additional funding for Advisory Committee on Education (ACE) grants (\$2,000); a contribution to the Prince George's County Animal Shelter Study (\$5,000); reduce funding provided to the Greenbelt Boys and Girls Club (\$2,000); provide a one-time grant to alight dance theater (\$1,000) and CHEARS (\$500); and one (1) FTE – Recreation Supervisor with funding to begin January 1, 2015 (\$35,000).

In order to further close the funding gap, it was proposed to use \$50,000 in savings from lower health insurance premiums, reduce the non-departmental reserve appropriation by \$5,000 and increase the real property tax rate by $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cent (\$142,000).

There was considerable discussion regarding the use of \$50,000 from the Special Projects Fund for setting up the Multipurpose Room in the Community Center to be used as a multi-media room. These funds would be used to outfit the room with equipment; funding for staff is not included in this amount. This funding will be included in the budget script prepared for the budget adoption on June 4.

Molly Lester, 6M Hillside, shared information with Council about her interpretation between cable franchise fees and the Public, Educational and Government Access Channel (PEG) fees.

A request was made to look for the Council policy that was established directing 1/5 (20%) of the PEG fee to GATE.

Bill Orleans, Greenbelt, asked and was provided answers to a few questions.

Mr. McLaughlin explained that the constant yield tax rate hearing will be June 4 when the budget is scheduled for adoption.

The meeting ended at 10:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Anne Marie Belton
Executive Associate*